



STATE OF WASHINGTON

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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January 2003 quarterly Animal Health newsletter

STATE VETERINARIAN'S MESSAGE

I wish you a happy New Year and may 2003 be a productive and joyous year for all of you. This will be the year of my retirement from the Department of Agriculture. I have attended the retirement seminar, picked up my paperwork and am deciding when I should make it official. It actually is a little scary, as I have not been unemployed since high school, except for my two clinical years at UC Davis.

West Nile Virus made it to our state late in 2002. Two birds were positive (a crow and a raven) and two horses. Both horses recovered. During the off season, we are hoping that many horses are being vaccinated as it takes some weeks after the second injection for some horses to become protected. As with any vaccine, some horses may never get a protective level of antibody.

Check our Web site, <http://www.wa.gov/agr/FoodAnimal/AnimalHealth/default.htm>, for WNV information and a chart for 2002 and 2003 with running totals of cases by county. Obviously the 2003 chart is showing all zeros so far, but this summer you might want to check it from time to time. We will not be issuing press releases on each case this year except locally for the first case in each county.

If any local associations would like a presentation on WNV, Dr. Connell or myself are available. We have a PowerPoint presentation on the disease. We could also present to horse groups if any of you would like to set it up for your neighborhoods. Even better, we'll share the PowerPoint with you if you would like to use it as a base for developing your own presentation. Contact us if you're interested and we can e-mail the presentation. To use it, you'll need a laptop computer with Microsoft PowerPoint and a projector that takes a feed from a laptop.

Shortly, all large animal clinics on our mailing list will receive a letter detailing the veterinary reserve group that we want to set up to help deal with foreign animal diseases, should one occur in our state. It was mentioned in the last newsletter and we have five names from that early announcement. There is an FAD on-line course with an exam and a certificate if you submit the test. That course will give you a start on your training. The certificate will be a prerequisite for the reserve members. For the course, go to <http://www.humanitarian.net/biodefense/fazdc/fadc1/>.

We are forging ahead in our emergency planning in other ways as well. We plan to hold a tabletop exercise in Whatcom County in April. The exact date has not been chosen. The exercise will be for local first responders, local emergency planners, extension agents, producers, veterinarians and anyone else who is interested. It will not be pre-announced to the media, however.

If you are interested in signing on with USDA in California or Nevada to help fight Exotic Newcastle Disease, they need lots of help. Contact Dr. Linda Carpenter, USDA APHIS Veterinary Services local office, 360-753-9430. They even have jobs for non-veterinarians or technicians so sign up that unemployed brother-in-law you have been sheltering and feeding over the winter. There is lots of overtime and per diem is paid. They particularly need workers who speak Spanish.

The next time you hear from me in this newsletter we will be announcing an opening in the Animal Health Program, assuming that there still is a budget to fill the position. Right now it looks like we will not lose any positions, but will lose from 3% to 5 % of our operating funding.

Robert W. Mead, DVM

Exotic Newcastle Disease in California—In California, Exotic Newcastle Disease (END) is affecting commercial poultry operations and backyard poultry. California has been battling END since October 2002. The following California counties are quarantined—Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, Santa Barbara and Ventura. END was confirmed recently in a backyard flock in Las Vegas, Nevada, and Nevada's Clark County was quarantined. Poultry and poultry products cannot be moved out of the quarantined counties. Eggs can be moved after they are washed, sanitized and packed in new materials. END does not pose a risk to human health. Poultry and egg products are safe for consumers.

For backyard flocks, END has affected mostly chickens, with a 75-100% death loss. Clinical signs of the disease in commercial flocks are more subtle—an increased death loss, diarrhea and a 10% drop in egg production. Devastating losses have not been seen in commercial flocks because of vaccination against endemic Newcastle Disease. Vaccination prevents clinical signs and decreases the death losses, but does **not** prevent spread of END.

How can poultry producers and bird owners help?

- Keep accurate records to monitor flock health.
- Report any sick, dying or dead birds so they can be tested to definitely diagnose END or other serious poultry disease. To report illness or death loss, notify the State Veterinarian's Office, 360-902-1878. Birds will be tested at no cost to you to ensure they do not carry disease.
- Refuse to accept any birds from Mexico or the quarantined counties in California and Nevada to prevent importing any infected birds.
- If you are aware of any bird shipments into our state from California, Nevada or Mexico, report these shipments to the State Veterinarian. Also, report any illegally smuggled birds. If an investigation is pursued, your identity will not be revealed.
- Review biosecurity procedures and use all caution to prevent the introduction of this devastating disease into our state.

For details on submitting birds to WSU's Avian Health and Food Safety Laboratory in Puyallup, contact Dr. A. Singh Dhillon, Director, 253-445-4537.

Newcastle Disease is a rapidly spreading, viral disease of domestic poultry and other birds. The disease has a rapid onset and severity depends upon the viral strain. The primary source of virus is the chicken, but other domestic birds and certain wild birds are susceptible and may be sources.

Virus is present in exhaled air, respiratory discharges, droppings, eggs laid during illness and all parts of the carcass during infection and at death. Chickens are readily infected by droppings, aerosols and by contaminated water or food.

Coughing, sneezing, gasping and abnormal respiratory sounds are often accompanied or followed by involvement of the nervous system, such as drooping wings, dragging legs, twisting of the head and neck, depression, lack of appetite and paralysis. Some strains of the virus result in diarrhea and swelling of the head. Young chickens are more susceptible and show signs sooner than older ones. In laying flocks, egg production may stop. Eggs from infected flocks may be abnormal in color, shape or surface and the white portion may be watery.

Washington State Department of Agriculture adopted an emergency regulation that prohibits moving all avian species into this state if they originate from counties where END is confirmed. This regulation remains in effect until mid-May. The new regulation also specifies requirements for anyone who organizes a bird show or other avian event. An official, valid health certificate or National Poultry Improvement Plan document must accompany any bird shipments. On either type of document, there must be a statement to the effect that the shipment did not originate from a quarantined area. For details, contact the State Veterinarian's Office, 360-902-1878, or refer to the Web site at <http://www.wa.gov/agr/FoodAnimal/AnimalHealth/default.htm>.

News from Other States—

- ♦ **Florida**—In response to the threat posed by Chronic Wasting Disease, Florida enacted new rules governing movement of cervids. For complete details, contact the Florida State Veterinarian, 850-410-0900. (E-mail November 27, 2002)
- ♦ **Hawaii**—***Hawaii quarantined the importation of all birds and poultry through the US Postal Service. Hatching eggs and day-old chicks are exempt. This precaution evolved from a concern about importing West Nile Virus-exposed birds onto the islands. For more information, contact the Hawaii State Veterinarian, 808-483-7100. (Quarantine Order No. 94, September 18, 2002)***
- ♦ **Montana**—***Livestock health officials enacted new tuberculosis (TB) testing regulations for specific breeds of imported cattle. For more information, call Montana's Animal Health Division, 406-444-2976. The Montana regulation extends to all US states and affects cattle breeds and crossbreeds prized for horn development, including Texas Longhorns, Corriente, Ankole, Ankole-Watusi, Chinampo and Argentine Criollo. Only steers and spayed heifers of these breeds are exempt, provided they are shipped and confined to a pre-approved Montana feedlot. These cattle breeds are not more susceptible to TB. They are frequently used at rodeos, ropings or other competitive events, where they may be commingled with cattle that may be of higher risk status. If the animals are of Mexican-origin or have been in contact or exposed to Mexican-origin cattle, the cattle will be quarantined upon arrival in***

Montana and must be retested for TB 30 to 120 days after importation. (News release, November 22, 2002)

◆ **Texas—**

- Texas searches for a new State Veterinarian after Dr. Linda Logan's resignation. Currently, Dr. James Lenarduzzi is the Interim State Veterinarian. For more information, contact Carla Everett, 1-800-550-8242, ext. 710, or ceverett@tahc.state.tx.us. Dr. Lenarduzzi is a 1973 graduate of Texas A&M University's College of Veterinary Medicine. He serves on the Small Ruminant Committee for the Texas Veterinary Medical Association and is a member of the AVMA, the Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association and the Texas Farm Bureau. Welcome Dr. Lenarduzzi! (E-mail December 9, 2002)
- USDA published its interim rule allowing Texas feeder cattle to continue to move out-of-state without additional restrictions, at least until September 30, 2003. Texas ranchers, feedlot operators and private practitioners have waited since June 2002 to learn if they would have to apply USDA ear tags to their 1.5 million steers, feeder bull calves and feeder heifers destined for out-of-state grazing or feedlots each year. Restrictions would also have required Texas feeder bull calves and feeder heifers to be tested for TB prior to movement. Texas lost its TB-free status on June 6, 2002, after two TB-infected cattle herds were detected in 2001. (News release, January 3, 2002)

Free disease workshop—A disease workshop will be offered this spring by the Washington Department of Health, at no cost to participants. The Zoonotic and Vectorborne Disease workshop will be held in 3 locations—Richland on March 26, Mt. Vernon on April 2 and Olympia on April 11.

Topics include:

- A review of rabies epidemiology, prevention and the recent cat rabies case in Walla Walla
- Zoonotic enteric agents including *E. coli* O157:H7 and *Salmonella*
- Tick surveillance and tickborne disease
- Human Psittacosis and avian Chlamydiosis
- Zoonotic agents of potential bioterrorism concern
- Other emerging zoonotic issues.

Veterinarians can earn CE for this workshop. On-line registration will be available in February. More details about locations and registration will follow next month. For more information contact Dr. John Grendon at 360-236-3362 or by e-mail at john.grendon@doh.wa.gov.

Health Certificate review—The Washington State Veterinarian's Office will no longer check each outgoing health certificate for compliance with the receiving state's importation requirements. Staff will continue to stamp certificates with the date received in this office and forward the receiving state's copy. States receiving animal shipments and documents from Washington State should continue to notify this office after a review of Washington State certificates which reveal violations of the receiving state's entry requirements. We will continue to inform our state's veterinarians of any problems brought to our attention. If you have any questions about this change in our policy, please contact us at 360-902-1878.

UK relaxes 6-month quarantine for US, Canadian pets—Beginning December 11, 2002, British authorities waived the long quarantine requirement for dogs and cats visiting from the continental US and Canada. The animals must meet requirements of the UK Pet Travel Scheme (PETS). For more information, go to pets.helpline@defra.gsi.gov.uk or www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/quarantine/index.htm. (PFI Media Update, November 21, 2002; JAVMA, Vol. 222, No. 1, January 1, 2003)

Electronic health certificate—USDA is working with CRI and GlobalVetLink to develop an electronic version of the interstate health certificate. This concept has been successfully applied in Florida. The electronic certificate will be Web-based, will incorporate the requirements endorsed by the US Animal Health Association and would be available to all states without charge. This nationwide system would provide electronic transmission of health certificate data, create printed certificates, provide access to domestic import/export information, create summary reports of periodic activity and produce a standardized data transmission file that could interface with local databases if desired. For more information, contact Dr. John Belfrage, USDA, 970-494-7310, jbelfrag@aphis.usda.gov, or Kevin Maher, GlobalVetLink, 515-296-0798, kmaher@globalvetlink.com. (E-mail November 27, 2002)

Brucellosis vaccination records—All Brucellosis vaccination records should be promptly mailed to the State Veterinarian's Office, P.O. Box 42577, Olympia, WA 98504. According to state requirements, an official vaccination report of all Brucellosis vaccinations must be made to our office within 30 days of vaccination. Vaccinations are not official until they are reported to us on official, completed and signed forms. VS form 4-26 is the official form that is to be used. Veterinarians should retain a copy of all completed forms for their files.

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To receive this publication in an alternative format, contact the State Veterinarian's Office, 360-902-1878 or Telecommunications Device for the Deaf, 360-902-1996.